



**Montana Economic Developers Association**

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February 21, 2007

**TO: HOUSE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE**  
**Rep. Walter McNutt, Chair**

**RE: HB 728 Expedite Application Review for Permits**

The Montana Economic Developers Association (MEDA) represents over 200 professionals who work for local economic development organizations across the State of Montana. We are professional "lead" economic developers, business specialists, government employees, and staff members of affiliated non-profit organizations which promote and foster economic development activities in Montana.

MEDA strongly supports HB728 as we believe Montana's future development will revolve around companies developing energy resources in our state. Currently, the permitting process can take several years to accomplish, which is a huge impediment to business development partners.

It should be noted that this bill does not reduce quality or professional standards companies must meet, but provides an option for companies to hire consultants to drive the permitting process.

Thank you for your support of HB728.

Sincerely,

Rick Edwards, President

Cc: MEDA Board of Directors

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